

11 March 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Economic Research Area, ORR  
FROM: Chief, Materials Division, ORR  
SUBJECT: Comments on "The Role of CIA in Nuclear War"

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1. Since this paper is concerned only with [REDACTED] I suppose no DD/I man can feel wholly safe in commenting. Nonetheless, certain thoughts occur to me which might be useful to somebody.

2. In general, I was favorably impressed with the paper. Its authors have given the problem a good deal of thought and have produced a well organized paper.

3. The paper emphasizes the paramount problems of survival, reorganization and re-deployment during the initial phases of a nuclear war (except in the strategic and tactical islands) and criticizes some of the assumptions made in current planning (p. 12). It also suggests that CIA's role during this initial period would be a very limited one (p. 3). It seems to me that this approach is the correct one and that planning should reflect it.

4. The paper recommends (p. 7) that CIA "undertake a study to determine where strategic and tactical islands would be likely to exist . . ." I think that this point should be underscored, since the fallout problem may make these so-called islands far fewer than the paper seems to expect, even if its "limitations" (p. 3) on this unlimited war are correct.

5. The paper skirts around what may be the key problem in this whole business. It suggests (p. 16) that [REDACTED] will need to be responsive to headquarters requirements, and further states (p. 17) that in active military theaters, the primary requirement of the military commanders will be for tactical intelligence for which CIA has a limited capability. [REDACTED]

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6. The paper argues (p. 23) that planning should be done on a flexible basis because of the difficulty of determining the circumstances

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that will exist following the initial phase of an all out nuclear war. It seems to me that this point is an extremely important one, and should be heavily emphasized.

7. The paper suggests (p. 29) that there is at present no real planning on the question of surrender terms in the event of a nuclear war. It suggests (p. 30) that "governmental considerations (sic) of this question would probably point to a role for CIA to assume". Does this mean that CIA should assist in planning surrender terms, or does it mean something else? If it means the former, then CIA is given a peculiar role, to say the least. If it means something else, it is not clear what that something else is.

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